



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/753,358	01/09/2004	Hideaki Takahashi	102106.02	6390
25944	7590	09/01/2005	EXAMINER	
OLIFF & BERRIDGE, PLC P.O. BOX 19928 ALEXANDRIA, VA 22320			TO, TOAN C	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			3616	
DATE MAILED: 09/01/2005				

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/753,358

Applicant(s)

TAKAHASHI, HIDEAKI

Examiner

Toan C. To

Art Unit

3616

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 24 June 2005.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-5 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 2-5 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 29 January 2004 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Request for Continued Examination (RCE)

1. The Request for continued examination filed on June 24, 2005 under 37 CFR 1.114 based on parent Application No. 10/753,358 is acceptable and a RCE has been established. An action on the RCE follows.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

2. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

3. Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Labrie et al (U.S. 5,941,558) in view of Carter et al (U.S. 5,456,490).

Labrie discloses a trim member for a vehicle comprising: a main body portion (12); an airbag door portion (16), the air bag door portion (16) is integrally formed with the main body portion (12); a tear portion (46) is formed in the airbag door portion (16); a hinge portion (44) is formed in the airbag door portion and is adjacent to a case mounting portion (portion of the housing 20 that contains a fastener 62); and a door hinge portion protecting plate (28) disposed below and separate from the airbag door portion (16), protruding forward a side of the tear portion (46) rather than toward the hinge portion (44) of the airbag door portion and having a high break force, wherein a predetermined spacing (space between a reaction plate 28 and the airbag door 16) is

Art Unit: 3616

provided between the door hinge portion protecting plate (28) and a lower surface of the airbag door portion (16).

Labrie does not directly disclose the trim member, wherein the door hinge is form as a thin portion having a predetermined thickness across a predetermined longitudinal width.

Carter et al teaches the invention wherein the door hinge (42) is form as a thin portion having a predetermined thickness across a predetermined longitudinal width.

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the hinge portion of the airbag assembly of Labrie by using teaching of Carter et al in order to ensure the airbag door properly open upon inflation of the airbag.

Labrie does not directly disclose what type of material is used to form the main body portion and the airbag door portion such as hard resin material. It is inherent that the airbag door portion is formed of hard resin. It also would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to use hard resin material to make the airbag door portion and the main body portion. Since it has been held to be within the general skill of a worker in the art to select a known material on the basis of its suitability for the intended use as a matter of obvious design choice. In re Leshin 125 USPQ 416.

Allowable Subject Matter

4. Claims 2-5 are allowed.

Response to Arguments

5. Applicant's arguments with respect to claim 1 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

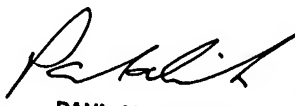
Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Toan C. To whose telephone number is (571) 272-6677. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon-Fri (8:00-5:00).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Paul Dickson can be reached on (571) 272-6669. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

TTo
August 22, 2005


PAUL N. DICKSON 8/30/05
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 3600